

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Claims 1-83 (Canceled)

84. (New) An audio entertainment system for storing and outputting audio information, comprising:

- a chassis for housing electrical components, wherein the chassis comprises a front side;

- at least one audio output comprised in or located on the chassis, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate signals;

- a non-volatile random-access storage system comprised in the chassis for storing a plurality of compressed musical pieces, wherein each of the plurality of compressed musical pieces comprises compressed audio information, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is substantially permanently affixed inside the chassis and is not readily removable from the chassis;

- a decompression system coupled to the non-volatile random-access storage system and to the at least one audio output, wherein the decompression system is operable to receive the compressed audio information from the non-volatile random-access storage system and is further operable to decompress the compressed audio information to produce uncompressed audio information, wherein the digital decompression system provides the uncompressed audio information to the at least one audio output; and

- a user interface system for controlling the audio entertainment system, wherein the user interface system includes a display positioned on the front side of the chassis, wherein the display is operable to display status information of the system and information regarding the plurality of compressed musical pieces stored in the storage system;

- wherein the audio entertainment system has an appearance which approximates standard audio equipment.

85. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein each of a subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces comprises a MPEG format.

86. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate audio signals.

87. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate digital signals.

88. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is further operable to store a plurality of directories, wherein each of the plurality of directories associates a selected subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces according to common characteristics of the selected subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces;

wherein the user interface control system is further operable to use the plurality of directories to selectively access one or more of the plurality of compressed musical pieces.

89. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 88, wherein the user interface control system is further operable to display list information for a directory of the plurality of directories, wherein the list information indicates one or more of the selected subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces.

90. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, further comprising:

a media reading system comprised in the chassis, wherein the media reading system is operable to receive audio media, wherein the audio media comprises audio information, wherein the media reading system is operable to read at least a portion of the audio information from the audio media;

a digital compression system coupled to the media reading system and coupled to the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the digital compression system is operable to receive the at least a portion of the audio information from the audio media, wherein the digital compression system is further operable to produce compressed audio

information from the at least a portion of the audio information from the audio media, wherein the digital compression system is further operable to transmit the compressed audio information to the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is further operable to store the compressed audio information.

91. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 90, wherein, in said producing the compressed audio information from the at least a portion of the audio information from the audio media, the digital compression system is further operable to produce the compressed audio information in a MPEG format.

92. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 90, wherein the media reading system comprises a CD reading system;
wherein the audio media comprises a CD.

93. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 90, wherein the media reading system comprises a DVD reading system;
wherein the audio media comprises a DVD.

94. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 90, wherein the media reading system is further operable to read the audio media faster than real-time.

95. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 90, wherein the media reading system comprises a receiver operable to receive one or more carrier waves;
wherein the audio media comprises a carrier wave.

96. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 95, wherein receiver is further operable to receive one or more FM radio waves;
wherein the carrier wave comprises FM radio waves.

97. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 95, wherein the carrier wave is from a satellite.

98. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 90, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is further operable to store a plurality of directories, wherein each of the plurality of directories associates a selected subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces according to common characteristics of the selected subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces;

wherein the user interface control system uses the contents directory to selectively access ones of the plurality of musical pieces;

wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system stores a database directory comprising information regarding contents of existing audio media;

wherein the user interface control system is operable to use the database directory to recognize audio media from the media reading system;

wherein the user interface control system is further operable to automatically add compressed audio information to the directory from the database directory in response to recognizing an audio media.

99. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the at least one audio input includes a network input adapted for receiving input audio information from a network.

100. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 99, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

101. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 99, wherein the network comprises a wireless link.

102. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 99, further comprising:

a digital compression system coupled to the network input and coupled to the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the digital compression system is operable to receive at least a portion of the audio information from the input audio information from the network, wherein the digital compression system is further operable to produce

compressed audio information from the at least a portion of the audio information from the input audio information from the network, wherein the digital compression system is further operable to transmit the compressed audio information to the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is further operable to store the compressed audio information.

103. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 102, wherein, in said producing the compressed audio information from the at least a portion of the audio information from the audio media, the digital compression system is further operable to produce the compressed audio information in a MPEG format.

104. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 99, wherein the user interface system is adapted to receive user input comprising selection information for selecting one or more musical pieces over the network;

wherein the user interface control system is operable to receive the user input comprising selection information and control the network input and the non-volatile random-access storage system to receive the one or more musical pieces and store the one or more musical pieces on the non-volatile random-access storage system.

105. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 99, wherein the user interface system is adapted to receive user input comprising purchasing information for purchasing one or more musical pieces over the network;

wherein the user interface control system is operable to receive the user input comprising purchasing information and control the network input and the non-volatile random-access storage system to receive the one or more musical pieces and store the one or more musical pieces on the non-volatile random-access storage system.

106. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, further comprising:

a media reading system comprised in the chassis and coupled to the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the media reading system is operable to receive audio media, wherein the audio media comprises compressed audio information, wherein

the media reading system is further operable to read at least a portion of the compressed audio information from the audio media, wherein the media reading system is further operable to transmit the compressed audio information to the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is further operable to receive and store the compressed audio information from the media reading system.

107. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 106, wherein the compressed audio information comprises a MPEG format.

108. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 106, wherein the media reading system comprises a receiver operable to receive one or more carrier waves; wherein the audio media comprises a carrier wave.

109. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 108, wherein the carrier wave is from a satellite.

110. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, further comprising:
a processing unit comprised in the chassis and coupled to the non-volatile random-access storage system, the at least one audio input, and the at least one audio output, wherein the processing unit comprises one or more of the decompression system and the audio entertainment control system.

111. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, further comprising:
a processing unit comprised in the chassis and coupled to the non-volatile random-access storage system, the at least one audio input, and the at least one audio output, wherein the processing unit implements one or more of the decompression system and the audio entertainment control system.

112. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84,
wherein the user interface system comprises one or more user output displays comprised on the chassis for displaying information to the user.

113. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84,
wherein the user interface system comprises one or more user inputs comprised on the chassis for receiving user input.

114. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 113, wherein said one or more user inputs comprised on the chassis comprise one or more of: buttons, knobs, touchscreen inputs, and switches.

115. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the user interface system comprises a wireless remote control device.

116. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84,
wherein the user interface system comprises:
one or more user inputs comprised on the chassis for receiving user input;
and
a wireless remote control device, wherein the remote control device is operable to provide user input to the user interface control system.

117. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to couple through an amplifier to one or more speakers.

118. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, further comprising:
a computer;
wherein the at least one audio input includes an input/output connector adapted for coupling to the computer, wherein the input/output connector is adapted to generate and/or receive control information with the computer;
wherein the computer is operable to present a user interface which is useable in controlling the user interface control system.

119. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system comprises a magnetic storage medium.

120. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is operable to store a contents directory which identifies locations of said plurality of musical pieces;

wherein the user interface control system uses the contents directory to selectively access ones of the plurality of compressed musical pieces.

121. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is operable to store one or more play lists, wherein each of the one or more play lists identifies locations of at least a subset of the plurality of compressed musical pieces.

132. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the user interface system is operable to receive voice commands from a user to select one or more compressed musical.

133. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein the audio entertainment system is acoustically quiet.

134. (New) The audio entertainment system of claim 84, wherein in a first mode the audio entertainment system is operable to continuously store previously received audio input, wherein the user interface system is operable to receive user input to select at least a portion of said previously received and stored audio input.

135. (New) A system, comprising:
a chassis for housing electrical components;
a processor comprised in the chassis;

a non-volatile random-access storage system coupled to the processor and comprised in the chassis, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is substantially permanently affixed inside the chassis and is not readily removable from the chassis;

at least one audio output coupled to the processor and comprised in or located on the chassis, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate signals;

a network interface coupled to the processor and operable to be coupled to a network;

a memory medium comprised in the chassis and coupled to the processor, wherein the memory medium stores program instructions executable by the processor to:

receive compressed audio information from the network;

store the compressed audio information in the non-volatile random-access storage system;

access the compressed audio information from the non-volatile random-access storage system;

uncompress the compressed audio information, thereby generating uncompressed audio information; and

output the uncompressed audio information through the at least one audio output; and

a user interface system for controlling the system, wherein the user interface system comprises a display which is operable to display status information of the system and information regarding the compressed audio information stored in the non-volatile random-access storage system;

wherein the system has an appearance which approximates standard audio equipment.

136. (New) The system of claim 135, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate audio signals.

137. (New) The system of claim 135, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate digital signals.

138. (New) The system of claim 135, wherein the compressed format comprises a MPEG format.

139. (New) The system of claim 135,
wherein, before said receiving compressed audio information from the network, the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

receive user input from a user, wherein the user input indicates a selection of the compressed audio information; and

transmit the selection to the network.

140. (New) The system of claim 139, further comprising:
a remote user input device coupled to the processor and operable by the user;
wherein, in said receiving the user input, the program instructions are further executable by the processor to receive the user input via the remote user input device.

141. (New) The system of claim 140, wherein the remote user input device is coupled to the processor in a wireless fashion.

142. (New) The system of claim 139, wherein the user input comprises a voice command.

143. (New) The system of claim 135,
wherein, before said uncompressing the compressed audio information, the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

receive user input from a user, wherein the user input indicates a selection of the compressed audio information; and

wherein the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

perform said outputting the uncompressed audio information through the at least one audio output in response to the selection.

144. (New) The system of claim 143, further comprising:

a remote user input device coupled to the processor and operable by the user;
wherein, in said receiving the user input, the program instructions are further executable by the processor to receive the user input via the remote user input device.

145. (New) The system of claim 144, wherein the remote user input device is coupled to the processor in a wireless fashion.

146. (New) The system of claim 143, wherein the user input comprises a voice command.

147. (New) The system of claim 135, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is rewritable.

148. (New) The system of claim 135, further comprising:
one or more audio inputs comprised in or located on the chassis for receiving input audio information;

wherein the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:
 receive the input audio information;
 compress the input audio information, thereby generating compressed input audio information;
 store the compressed input audio information in the non-volatile random-access storage system.

149. (New) The system of claim 144, wherein the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

 access the compressed input audio information from the non-volatile random-access storage system;
 uncompress the compressed input audio information, thereby generating uncompressed input audio information; and
 output the uncompressed input audio information through the at least one audio output.

150. (New) The system of claim 149, wherein the uncompressed input audio information is a reproduction which approximates CD quality of the input audio information.

151. (New) The system of claim 150,
wherein, in said compressing the input audio information, the program instructions are further executable by the processor to compress the input audio information using a MPEG format.

152. (New) The system of claim 135, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

153. (New) The system of claim 135, wherein the user interface system includes a display positioned on a front side of the chassis.

154. (New) A system, comprising:
a chassis for housing electrical components;
a processor comprised in the chassis;
a non-volatile random-access storage system coupled to the processor and comprised in the chassis, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is substantially permanently affixed inside the chassis and is not readily removable from the chassis;
at least one audio output coupled to the processor and comprised in or located on the chassis, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate signals;
a receiver coupled to the processor and operable to receive a carrier wave, wherein the carrier wave comprises digital audio information;
a memory medium comprised in the chassis and coupled to the processor, wherein the memory medium stores program instructions executable by the processor to:
receive the digital audio information from the receiver;
store the digital audio information in the non-volatile random-access storage system;

access the digital audio information from the non-volatile random-access storage system;

transform the digital audio information into analog audio information; and

output the analog audio information through the at least one audio output;

and

a user interface system for controlling the system, wherein the user interface system comprises a display which is operable to display status information of the system and information regarding the digital audio information stored in the non-volatile random-access storage system, wherein the user interface system is further operable to receive user input to select at least a portion of previously received and stored digital audio information;

wherein the system has an appearance which approximates standard audio equipment.

155. (New) The system of claim 154, wherein the carrier wave is from a satellite.

156. (New) The system of claim 154, wherein the carrier wave is from a network.

157. (New) The system of claim 154, wherein the digital audio information comprises compressed audio information;

wherein, in said transforming the digital audio information into analog audio information, the program instruction are further executable by the processor to uncompress the compressed audio information.

158. (New) The system of claim 157, wherein the compressed audio information comprises a MPEG format.

159. (New) The system of claim 154,

wherein the program instruction are further executable by the processor to compress the digital audio information from the receiver, thereby producing compressed audio information;

wherein, in said storing the digital audio information in the non-volatile random-access storage system, the program instruction are further executable by the processor to store the compressed audio information in the non-volatile random-access storage system;

wherein, in said transforming the digital audio information into analog audio information, the program instruction are further executable by the processor to uncompress the compressed audio information.

160. (New) The system of claim 159, wherein the compressed audio information comprises a MPEG format.

161. (New) A system, comprising:

a chassis for housing electrical components;

a processor comprised in the chassis;

a non-volatile random-access storage system coupled to the processor and comprised in the chassis, wherein the non-volatile random-access storage system is substantially permanently affixed inside the chassis and is not readily removable from the chassis;

at least one audio output coupled to the processor and comprised in or located on the chassis, wherein the at least one audio output is operable to generate signals;

a network interface coupled to the processor and operable to be coupled to a network;

a memory medium comprised in the chassis and coupled to the processor, wherein the memory medium stores program instructions executable by the processor to:

receive audio information from the network, wherein the audio information comprises a MPEG codec;

store the audio information in the non-volatile random-access storage system;

access the audio information from the non-volatile random-access storage system;

decode the audio information, thereby producing analog audio information;

and

output the analog audio information through the at least one audio output;
and

a user interface system for controlling the system, wherein the user interface system comprises a display which is operable to display status information of the system and information regarding the audio information stored in the non-volatile random-access storage system;

wherein the system has an appearance which approximates standard audio equipment.

162. (New) The system of claim 161, wherein the network comprises a wireless link.

163. (New) The system of claim 161,
wherein, before said decoding the audio information, the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

receive user input from a user through the user interface system, wherein the user input indicates a selection of the audio information; and

wherein the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

perform said outputting the analog audio information through the at least one audio output in response to the selection.

164. (New) A system for distributing audio products, comprising:

a processor;

a storage system coupled to the processor, wherein the storage system stores a plurality of audio products, wherein each audio product comprises compressed audio information;

a network interface coupled to the processor, wherein the network interface is operable to be coupled to a network;

a memory medium coupled to the processor, wherein the memory medium comprises program instruction executable by the processor to:

receive audio product selection information indicating a selected audio product of the plurality of audio products through the network interface;
receive payment information through the network interface;
transmit the selected audio product through the network interface.

165. (New) The system of claim 164, wherein the network comprises the Internet.

166. (New) The audio distribution system of claim 164, wherein each of a subset of the plurality of audio products comprises audio information compressed using a MPEG format.

167. (New) The system of claim 164, wherein the program instructions are further executable by the processor to:

transmit inventory information through the network interface, wherein the inventory information indicates at least a subset of the plurality of audio products.

168. (New) The system of claim 164, wherein the network comprises a wireless link.